he was close (close enough to be your ghost) by buckyjbarnnes

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Summary:

He should probably think that it’s fucked up, that it should stop, that he should do something to stop it, but he loves it. Fuck everything else, that’s the real reason why he loves traveling so much. Not having nightmares and having some company are just an excuse he’s made up to tell himself, so that he doesn’t feel as guilty every time he wakes up with a hangover, an empty feeling in his belly and lying over a pool of his own come.

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Author's Note:

> I don't know why I wrote this, I was supposed to be doing homework. Also, I don't know, maybe this could qualify as dub-con to some people I guess, but I don't think it is, so maybe it is not after all. By the way, I know jack shit about how high school teams do the traveling thing etc, I just made shit up and combined it with what I've been told and what I've read to write this lmao.
>
> Title's from Cornerstone by Arctic Monkeys.

They travel like, *a lot* , for a small town, high school basketball team, and Steve *loves* that. He loves traveling because it means he doesn't have to hang out at his house alone for the night, with all the lights turned on and with his covers pulled up to his ear. It also means shooting the shit, drinking and smoking some weed before they have to go to sleep, and he sleeps best when he's had a fix of those things. They're not supposed to do that shit, what with them all being in the basketball team and being *respectable athletes* or something. But they're all like, 17 and it's kinda stupid to ask guys their age not to do that kind of stuff.

He also loves traveling because of what happens anywhere between 2AM and 4AM. He should probably think that it's *fucked up* , that it should stop, that he should do something to stop it, but he *loves* it. Fuck everything else, that's the real reason why he loves traveling so much. Not having nightmares and having some company are just an excuse he's made up to tell himself, so that he doesn't feel as guilty every time he wakes up with a hangover, an empty feeling in his belly and lying over a pool of his own come.

What happens between those hours, it's never really clear. Like, he should probably try to find out what *really* happens, but he can't bring himself to do it because he loves it so much. It doesn't cause him any pain, doesn't cause him any feelings that are bad per se, just lust and unbearable arousal that breaks him down, makes him shiver

whenever he remembers.

Usually, after all the team sneaks back to their respective rooms after drinking and smoking, and Steve feels his head drowsy and his body warm and relaxed, his mind between sleep and consciousness, it starts and he feels *everything* ; the hand in his hair, pulling and forcing his face into his pillow. The hard, lean muscle of a damp body enveloping him and manhandling him around like a rag doll. The facial hair; the pseudo moustache and beard, so fucking *ridiculous* and *appealing* at the same time, leaving marks all over Steve's pale and tender skin. That perfect line of white, sharp teeth that only grazes, only ever close enough to tease and make Steve squirm. The big, strong hands stretching him apart and gripping hard enough to leave bruises. His desperate clutching of sheets. Then, the burning feeling of being *breached* , being opened around a hard, pulsing dick. It makes Steve *vulnerable* , makes him render all control and go pliant. Makes him moan like a *bitch* . And then it's all bliss, only cries of pleasure come out of his lips and his mind is blank as he's fucked into the mattress until he's sobbing and incoherent, until he hears a tell-tale groan and he's left alone and tangled on his sheets.

He usually wants to smash his head against the wall when he wakes up, after nights like that. The shame, the emptiness and the confusion he feels after *it* happens, makes him dizzier than any weed or fucking whiskey could. He just can't see it happening, like in *real life* , because he should be the one on top, not the one taking it and spreading his legs as soon as he feels the first touch.

Steve tries to tell himself that nights like that are just a different kind of nightmare. After all, his nightmares are almost as vivid as those kinds of dreams. They feel like hallucinations, like sleep paralysis or whatever. Steve really *tries* to believe that. It's nobody's business if he fails or succeeds.

He tries to take his mind off the dreams. He tries to think of other things, because he knows he's not forgetting them. Steve tries to *purge* them out of him. He has his ways and the means after all, since he's for sure not *King Steve* anymore, but popular enough to be liked and to have a bunch of girls ready and willing to drop their panties for him. He usually only fucks the blonde, curly haired ones, but so fucking what? He may have found out he has a type after Nancy. And

he also usually is kinda rough with them, but that's fine, they love it, and he never claimed to be a *gentleman* or whatever, in the first place. So it works, it really does fucking work, because he *purges* , because he feels like he's getting it - *him* - out of his system.

And it's a temporary balm, a way of allowing him to have some of his dignity restored. To make himself believe he's still in control. Even if it is just a fantasy, those dreams and shit, they're still very *embarrassing* , especially since they have the asshole who broke his face not 5 months ago as a co-protagonist.

His purging only works until he sees a sweaty Billy, panting and flaunting his muscles, and catches a whiff of Billy's scent when they're playing. Steve knows he's *literally* fucked when that happens.

And if it was real, those fantasies, Steve would be impressed and freaked out by the fact that Billy *always* knows when he's made Steve lose his shit. *Always* knows that whenever he's playing with that barely contained rage, moving around like he owns the court, Steve's mind and body scream in need of him.

"Plant your fucking feet, Harrington," Billy growls at him when Steve falls to the ground like sack of potatoes.

He's not a shit player, okay? It's Billy's fault. The way his cologne mixes with his sweat doesn't allow Steve to think straight. He's not exactly minding how he's standing when all he wants to do is fucking *jump* Billy right there in the middle of the court. He swears he can't just *see* the lean muscle of Billy's body as he plays, he can *feel* it, every movement, like in his fantasies, when Billy's inside of him. Steve's *dizzy* with it all.

"Um." Is all Steve manages, when Billy goes to help him up. A pantomime of the first time they ever interacted, when Billy threw him right back to the ground. Steve is blushing, his mind debating between activating his pride or his cock.

Of course his dick wins. Steve wants to die.

"Stop fuckin' daydreaming and get with the program, pretty boy."

Billy says - *growls* - as he's helping Steve stand up. Billy doesn't look mocking, or amused. He looks… pissed, and it turns Steve on even more. He feels high on desire.

Steve stands up, jogs away from Billy on wobbly legs, and tries to think of those fucking demodogs with flower faces and millions of sharp teeth to make his rapidly growing bulge subside.

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The game's good. They end up winning, and the coach is ecstatic. Everyone in the team is too. Last game they lost, so it explains their attitude.

Steve takes a quick shower, scrubbing hard and leaving red marks all over in his haste, and goes to get dressed up even before half the team has gotten in the shower. He'd like to get an eyeful of naked Billy, because *who wouldn't* , but when his want for him is amplified like it is in that moment, Steve doesn't want to test his luck. His body acts on its own accord when Billy gets him like that.

And he should treasure the time after a game, like most of the guys on the team do. He would be lying if he said he didn't like it, but today, he *dreads* it. He knows he'll get high, get drunk and then he'll dream of Billy holding him down and fucking him. He also knows he'll have to jerk off in the shower before they leave. Then he'll have to jerk off again, once he gets home. He's not even pissed off about it, he's just resigned.

He's mute on the way to the hotel. Tommy is being a dick, as always, but Steve's just sitting there, sweating, his brain going haywire and melting through his ears. Billy doesn't usually help him with the teasing, but today he looks *inspired* , and he's being a real asshole. Steve really wants to slap himself when he realizes that he finds him most attractive when he's acting like that.

And the cherry on top for Steve that night, is that they are sharing rooms. It's not like they don't share on the regular, but coach likes to do it like, one time alphabetically and the next up to them. When

they choose who to share the room with, he usually goes with Ben Rogers, who is nicer than the rest of the guys and who knows how to crack a joke from time to time. He's also muscled up, blond, long haired and has blue eyes, but Steve tries not to think about *that* as a reason for their friendship.

When it's alphabetical, he goes with Billy. The fantasies only happen when he goes with Billy. And it's equal parts paradise and hell, going with him, because he's gruff and loves needling Steve, but he doesn't mind that Steve sometimes wakes up in the middle of the night and needs to turn on the light. He's also usually up and ready, downstairs or with Tommy on those nights where Steve wakes up in a pool of his own come. Steve thinks it's *weird* , but he's also really fucking thankful.

Tonight is one of those nights where coach makes them share a room in alphabetical order. Steve, for like, the millionth time that night, wants to die.

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It isn't even 12PM yet, but Steve's properly *fucked up* . He took more hits than he should've off of the blunts they passed around in Tommy's room. Then he drank a stupid amount of the whiskey they snuck. Steve still doesn't understand how they sneak the weed and the booze. He's thankful they do, though. The lust that's been consuming him is now dormant, still there, but manageable. Steve prays that he just falls asleep immediately from exhaustion and intoxication that night. He also prays that he doesn't, and that he gets to dream about Billy doing all kinds of filthy shit to him.

And when Steve's intoxicated mind has lost the battle and has started to think about a hard, damp dick sliding down the small of his back, and he has actually started to drool in public, Ben helps him stumble to his shared room.

Steve's stripping his clothes as soon as Ben exits the room. They *burn* him.

He lies down on the cool sheets of the bed, closes his eyes and tries to even out his breathing. Tries to ignore the pulsing erection he's sporting. And it might've been hours or minutes, it's all the same to Steve, because then his back is arching and he's clutching the damp sheets for dear life. A loud moan escapes him, and lips are on his neck, teasing and gently following the line of his jaw.

He never remembers the words that are whispered in his ear in the morning, but he likes to pretend it's something gruff but nice at the same time, something *in character* . Sometimes, when it isn't as heated as tonight, he likes to think they go along the lines of "You're mine, pretty boy," in that husky, growly voice.

Two strong hands part his legs, and Steve bends them at the knees, exposing all the tender parts of himself to the soothing, cool air of the room. He moans, maybe louder than he should, when he is dragged by the hips in a bruising grip, and is pressed to a firm, pulsing dick. Then he feels a strong enveloping body get closer to him, and for the first time, he feels plush, soft lips against his own. He even tastes the lips; the bitter taste of cigarettes and a hint of something sweet, almost close to *honey* . Steve moans into the kiss helplessly. And it isn't *cute* ; it's taking, biting, almost violent. Steve's dizzy with it, with that lascivious tongue that's tormented him before invading his mouth, with that line of pearly teeth biting and bruising his lips.

The lips are gone too soon, so Steve whimpers, but then he's shuddering as a rough, calloused hand slicks him up. Stretches him apart, breaches him, makes him so *giddy* he's almost ready to come. Steve moans wantonly as he wishes that hand would grab his weeping dick too.

He forgets about it when he feels that the insistent, damp erection is being lined with his hole. He's charged and ready, and he thinks that in that moment, it doesn't really matter that he's gonna feel confused and guilty and pathetic in the morning, because the vividness of the fantasy is more addictive than any drug.

Steve moans and gasps as he's penetrated, opening his legs wider, eager for it. He hooks them around strong shoulders, and it all feels like *too much* and *not enough* at the same time. The slide of the pulsing dick inside him *burns* so good, Steve can't help but cry out

and shudder, as the angle hits him dead-on.

He never remembers the specifics when he wakes up. He does remember the feel of being full and that the pace is always relentless so he never gets to adjust to it, but the burn of being stretched open is so incredibly *good* , he never wants it to stop. He always remembers the way he is taken; the wild and possessive way he's grabbed and breached. That's the best part.

Steve wishes he could change one thing about these dreams. He wishes he could see those blue, sharp eyes as he's taken, but it doesn't seem impossible now that he's gotten to kiss those lips he wanted for so long. Even without getting to see the eyes, he's more than happy with what he has.

He can *smell* him. He can smell the musky scent that lingers after a game; that overpriced cologne he always wears mixed with his sweat. Steve's instincts take over when he smells him, so since he can't give proper feedback and bite, scratch and grab, because his limbs never respond the way he wants them to, he bites into the source of the intoxicating smell. He bites the neck, hard enough that he tastes a bit of copper, and that it earns him a growl at his ear. Steve feels so giddy and proud about it, that it almost pushes him to the edge.

He yelps when that sweet spot inside him is insistently being speared by the cock breaching him apart. He moans wantonly for more, and he is rewarded with brutal thrusts that hit him dead on. Right before he topples over the edge, he thinks that he'd like it if he came inside. He'd like to be *claimed* that way, and he wishes he could say it out loud, but then he can't take it anymore and he cries out, loud enough to be heard by the people next door, coming hard and long all over himself. The thrusts don't stop, so he keeps sobbing with pleasure as his dick pulses and he writhes over the damp sheets. The cock inside him leaves him too soon after that, and breathless words are whispered in his ear. A small bite on his neck being soothed by a wet tongue, and then the sweaty heat above him is gone before Steve can reach out and grab or do anything. It all vanishes and he's left alone in the room.

He's too far gone and exhausted, so he doesn't feel empty right away, but he knows that he'll feel it as soon as he wakes up.

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Ben's talking his ear off but Steve's head is about to explode. He has a hangover and it's the worst kind: a *moral* fucking hangover. It seemed so *real* last night. And it isn't like other times it didn't feel real, but last night was different, because he apparently finally lost his shit and imagined he *kissed* Billy fucking Hargrove. And then he imagined he gave him a *hickey* . And then he thought that he'd like it if Billy came *inside him* . And he *enjoyed it* a little bit *too much* .

So. He's not really in the mood for Ben's cheeriness.

"Man...can you tone that down?"

Ben looks worried. A palm lands on his shoulder. "Tone what down? Are you okay?"

Steve feels guilty. Ben's just being his usual self, he has no idea. It's not his fault. "Yeah. Um. Just... your voice. Sorry."

Ben doesn't look offended, he just nods and pats him a bit. "Sure, yeah. You must have a hell of a hangover. Sorry, man."

Steve just nods, looking down at the plate of scrambled eggs in front of him. Steve doesn't even look up at Ben, because he knows that the blond hair and the blue eyes are going to remind him too much of Billy. Most of the time he likes that, but today? Today he *can't fucking take it* .

He also thinks that Billy was in the room that morning, when he woke up in his drying semen. And that was new, because Billy was never there when Steve woke up. He was soundly asleep, all peaceful looking and still, so out of character for him. Steve looked at him for a good minute, awakening all kinds of feelings he wasn't ready to face, like some creepy motherfucker, and then the images of his embarrassing dream came reeling back in his mind, and he had to go take a shower before he died of mortification. Billy wasn't there when Steve came out of the shower.

He's still not there, having breakfast with the rest of the team. Steve

hopes he comes down or appears from wherever he is after he's done with his scrambled eggs. He can't face him when his body is sore, and when his head pulses like it's about to explode.

Of course that's exactly when he hears Tommy's *screeching* fucking laugh approaching, and he winces at the sudden and obtrusive sound. He pops a bite of the scrambled eggs in his mouth, fearing what he knows it's gonna happen. If Tommy's there, and already being a loud douchebag, Billy's with him. He only ever uses that exaggerated screech when he's with the guy.

That's when he also realizes that there's two free spaces in front of him and Ben. He knows for a fact those are the only free spaces left.

As they both approach, Steve squints at his plate, trying to melt through the ground. The two chairs in front of him and Ben scrape the floor loudly and Steve winces again. Ben says, "Mornin'," briefly looking up from his plate at Billy and Tommy sitting down.

"Mornin' Rogers," he hears Billy say. "Mornin' to you too, Harrington, you look like shit," He can hear the gruff, mocking and teasing tone, but he chooses to ignore it. He says nothing in return and keeps looking at his plate.

"What's it, Stevie? Spill it," Tommy says, elbowing and unresponsive Billy, who Steve knows is looking at him.

"I'm just hungover, Tommy. Leave me the fuck alone." Steve says, irritated all of a sudden. He pops some more scrambled eggs in his mouth.

"Riiight. Looks like someone's got his period." Tommy says and snorts at his own stupid joke. Then he elbows Billy again, but he gets no response.

Ben probably rolls his eyes inconspicuously because immediately after Tommy says that dumb shit, he says, "I'm gonna get going, you coming Steve?"

And before Steve can do anything because he's chewing, Billy's saying still teasing but in a sharper tone, "But we were having a nice

conversation, weren't we, pretty boy? Don't go with your *boyfriend* yet,"

Ben just sighs, stands up and says, "I'll save you a place in the bus." Steve sees him walk away, with food still in his mouth and kind of confused at the implication and at Billy's tone. He turns to look back at Billy to ask for an explanation and to tell him to fuck off, but it's all forgotten when he nearly chokes on his food with what he sees.

Tommy's lost interest in what's happening, and has started talking to some other guy who's sat next to him, so he doesn't notice. It's only Steve slamming a fist to his chest, with wide eyes looking at Billy's smug face. His heart has leapt up into his throat and is fighting for space with the scrambled eggs. He manages to swallow, and Billy's keeps staring at him.

Steve tries to reason, tries to tell himself he's seeing things and that his eyes are playing tricks on him. That can't be it. The thing he's looking at on the side of Billy's neck isn't a *bite mark* that's purpling and looks freshly scabbed over.

He almost believes it, because it's hard to think of the only other option as reality. That is, until Billy's smiling *that* sultry smile, and circling the table, leaning on Steve's chair and using that same voice he used last night to whisper, "You could be choking on something *much better* , pretty boy, if you only paid more attention."

And then he's gone, to get a plate of food, and Steve follows him with his eyes, nearly having a stroke or something. He can literally *feel* his brain short circuiting, and he can't help but sit there at loss.

He chokes for real this time, on his own spit, when Billy comes back and sits next to him, unexpectedly *grabbing* the upper part of his thigh in a quick, rough grip under the table, and then going back to munching the scrambled eggs like nothing has happened.

Steve doesn't know it then, because he's about to fucking *pass out* , but he'll later find out that Billy's right. He could have been having a much better time with all their traveling, if he had only paid more attention since the beginning.

Author's Note:

English is not my first language, so I really appreciate it if you leave some feedback! <3

And yes, the character I "made up", Ben, is in fact, /that/ Ben everyone's been thristing after these past couple of weeks. I know you're reading this, E. I included Ben for you because I promised.

Thank you for reading this mess!